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Rep. Welch has led the charge to hold BP accountable and ensure the company meets all its obligations to the residents of the Gulf Coast. For more on Welch's efforts, read below:

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July 15, 2010: With Rep. Welch's support, the Blowout Prevention Act of 2010 (H.R. 5626) passed the Energy and Commerce Committee. The legislation would require the use of well-control technologies and practices for the drilling of high-risk oil and gas wells in the United States. Welch successfully amended the bill to include a provision that would require a study of the economic, safety and environmental impact of requiring that one or more relief wells be drilled in tandem with the wells covered by this act. The bill will now be considered by the full House of Representatives.

June 29, 2010: Welch and Rep. Lois Capps (D-Calif) wrote a letter to BP demanding that the company stop employing the private contractor Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health (CTEH) in its public health response. CTEH has been cited in a long line of controversial cases in which it has flouted accepted data collection methods, resulting in tainted results serving their employer's corporate interests. Welch and Capps demanded that BP release all the data collected by CTEH to the federal government so that their findings can be verified.

[To read a copy of this letter click here.](#)

June 17, 2010: Welch grilled BP CEO Tony Hayward about the oil company's long record of safety failures at a hearing of a House Energy and Commerce subcommittee. Welch, who led House efforts calling for BP to suspend its dividend and establish an independent fund to pay for cleanup and compensation efforts, took Hayward to task for his company's history of cutting corners and putting profits ahead of safety. After citing several of BP's most egregious recent failures, Welch asked whether a CEO with a record like Hayward's should consider resigning.

[To read more about this click here.](#)

June 16, 2010: After BP announced its intention to create an independently administered escrow account to pay for the damages in the Gulf, Welch reaffirmed his intention to make sure BP follows through on its pledge. "BP has finally acknowledged what the American people have been saying for weeks," Welch said. "It must take responsibility for its reckless conduct, clean up the Gulf and compensate the countless victims of the disaster it caused. As the American people grow more and more skeptical of BP's statements, they are demanding that BP – not the taxpayer – foot the bill for this environmental and economic catastrophe. Suspending BP's dividend payments to fund an independent escrow account is a good first step, but it is just that: a first step. I intend to do all I can to make sure BP follows through on its pledge and puts its money where its mouth is."

[Click here to read more about this statement.](#)

June 15, 2010: At an Energy and Commerce subcommittee hearing, Welch sharply questioned oil company executives about the billions of dollars in tax breaks the industry enjoys. Addressing top executives of BP, ExxonMobil, Chevron, ConocoPhillips and Shell Oil, Welch asked whether profitable industries like theirs should continue to enjoy taxpayer-funded subsidies. "The question really is," Welch asked "should taxpayers of the United States continue to provide billions of dollars in subsidies to an industry – the oil industry – that's mature; to an industry that's extremely profitable; and to an industry that's based on a

carbon-based fuel? Or, is it time finally for the taxpayer incentives that are being steered to the oil industry to be redirected to efforts to develop a 21st century clean energy economy?"

[To read more about this questioning click here](#) .

June 15, 2010: As BP board members debated whether to move forward with a scheduled dividend payment, Welch and 31 other members of Congress called on the oil company to instead direct those funds to an escrow account dedicated to cleaning up the Deepwater Horizon spill and compensating its victims. In a letter to BP CEO Tony Hayward, the House members – led by Welch, Subcommittee on Energy and Environment Chairman Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Rep. Lois Capps (D-Calif.) – urged BP to ensure it has the funds to pay the full costs of the devastating Gulf Oil spill by temporarily suspending its annual \$10 billion dividend. Further, the group called on BP to establish an escrow account to cover cleanup and compensation costs – and to direct dividend payments to that account. "Your company has affirmed its intention to pay the full costs of this devastating environmental and economic disaster," Welch and his colleagues wrote. "As those costs continue to rise – to \$37 billion, by one estimate – the American people require an assurance that your company will be able to honor all legitimate claims."

[Click here to read the full letter sent to BP.](#)

June 8, 2010: After BP announced its intention to move forward with a payment to shareholders, Welch and a coalition of House members called on CEO Tony Hayward to suspend dividend payments and advertising campaigns until it remedies the environmental disaster it caused in the Gulf of Mexico. In a letter to Hayward, Welch took BP to task for diverting its resources away from the ongoing recovery effort and directing them to halt profit payouts and public relations campaigns. Also leading the effort were Chairman Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Rep. Lois Capps (D-Cali.) and more than 29 other members of Congress. "We urge you to halt your planned dividend payout and cancel your advertising campaign until you have done the hard work of capping the well, cleaning up the Gulf Coast and making whole those whose very livelihoods are threatened by this catastrophe," the members wrote. "Not a moment before then should you return to business as usual."

[Click here to read the full letter sent to BP CEO Tony Hayward.](#)

May 12, 2010: Following the disaster at the Deepwater Horizon oil rig, Welch took part in a bipartisan congressional delegation trip to the Gulf of Mexico to see the devastating impact of the BP oil spill on the Gulf Coast's environment and economy. Welch and seven other members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee conducted a fly-over of the oil spill with experts from the U.S. Geological Service and the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration. They were briefed at the Unified Command Center in Robert, La., by the Coast Guard and the Department of Interior. The delegation also met with local officials, members of response teams and Gulf residents and businesses affected by the spill at Hopedale, La., one of the oil spill response staging areas.